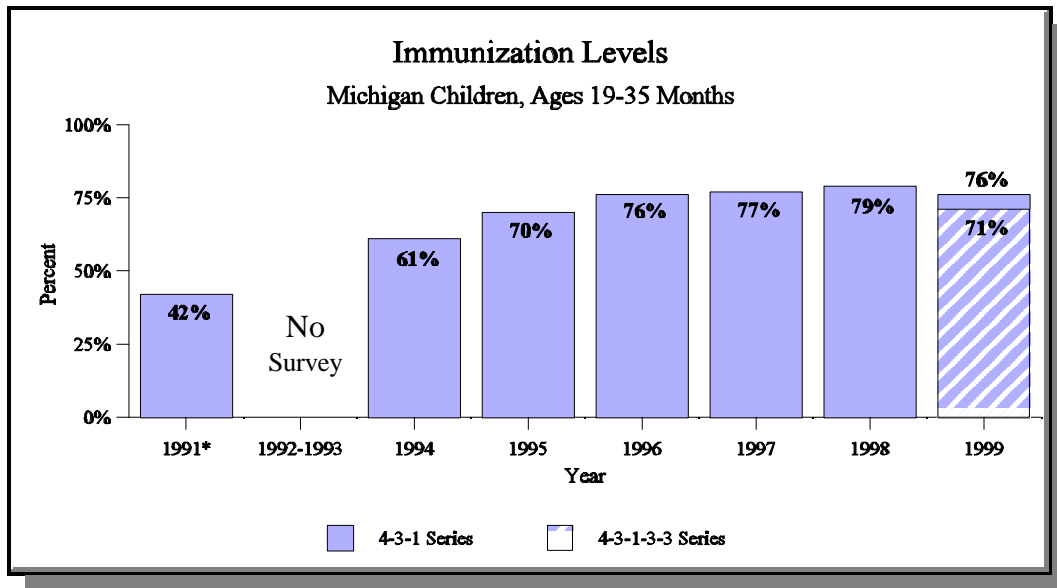


Focused Indicators

Preventive Health Care

Childhood Immunizations



Source: National Immunization Survey, CDC

*1991 data is from a retrospective study by MDCH

How are we doing?

Immunization is the process by which a person is rendered immune or resistant to a specific disease. Childhood immunizations provide protection against:

varicella (chickenpox);
diphtheria;
Haemophilus influenzae type B;
hepatitis B;
measles;
mumps;

pneumococcal disease;
polio;
rubella;
tetanus; and
pertussis (whooping cough).

These diseases are serious and may even be life threatening in very young children. Therefore, most of these vaccines should be administered in the first two years of life.

Prior to 1999, immunization levels in Michigan were based on the percentage of children two years of age who had received four doses of a vaccine containing diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis components (DTP or DtaP), three doses of polio vaccine, and one dose of a vaccine containing measles, mumps and rubella components (MMR). In 1999, three doses of *Haemophilus*

influenzae type B vaccine (Hib) and three doses of hepatitis B vaccine (Hep B) were added to the list of vaccines used to assess the extent to which Michigan's children are appropriately immunized. The 1999 National Immunization Survey indicates that 71 percent of Michigan's two-year-olds were fully immunized using the new standard and 76 percent immunized under the prior 4-3-1 standard.

How does Michigan compare with the U.S.?

Michigan's 1999 immunization rate of 76 percent was similar to the U.S. rate of 80 percent.

What other information is important to know?

As a direct consequence of successful immunization, vaccine-preventable diseases have become less common. Major barriers to infant and childhood immunization have been identified including: (1) low public awareness and lack of public demand for immunization, (2) inadequate access to immunization services, and (3) missed opportunities to administer vaccines.

Of particular concern are missed opportunities, when a child could have received an immunization but did not, often because the child's immunization status was not reviewed. On average, children visit a health care provider 10 times by their second birthday. It takes only five visits to administer the recommended vaccines.

What is the Department of Community Health doing to affect this indicator?

The department is actively working to increase childhood immunization. The federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) program and the MI-VFC program make vaccines available to children from low-income families. This eliminates the major financial barrier to children being vaccinated. In 1999, over 2 million doses of vaccine were distributed. All recommended vaccines are available for eligible children. Incentives are provided for Medicaid managed care plans that have children appropriately immunized.

The Michigan Childhood Immunization Registry (MCIR) is a statewide registry of immunizations administered to children (infants to 20 years of age) that can be accessed by approved users anywhere in the state to reduce missed opportunities. In addition to maintaining an immunization record for each child, MCIR generates recall cards for children who have fallen behind on their immunizations. Providers and local health departments can generate profiles of the immunization levels in their clinic or community to determine if additional interventions should be developed. MCIR contains over 17 million shot records on more than 2 million children.

It is important for parents to receive accurate information about vaccines so they can make informed decisions about their children's health. Federal law mandates that Vaccine Information Statements must be given to the parent(s) to read prior to any immunization of their children. In

addition, the department produces informational pamphlets on immunization and specific vaccines. Information on new vaccines, vaccine schedules, appropriate storage, and handling of vaccines is made available to providers through newsletters, seminars, conferences, and video conferences. Immunization field representatives work with local health departments to encourage immunization as part of maternal and child health services.

The department provides testing services for the diagnosis of many vaccine-preventable diseases. This is essential in assessing vaccine failure and disease control in unvaccinated populations.

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